

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 11, 2011

CONTACT: Ted Jackson
(916) 988-0205

Service Reductions and Equipment Failures Close Peninsula Campground at Folsom Lake

State Park officials at Folsom Lake State Recreation Area (SRA) have announced the closing of the Peninsula campground and day use area effective Monday, July 18, 2011.

This closure, unfortunate but necessary, must be implemented due to a lack of staffing to safely operate all facilities within the State Recreation Area and the continuing State hiring freeze. Additionally, this past July 4th weekend saw the complete failure of the sewer lift station that services the Peninsula Campground restrooms and shower facilities.

Gold Fields District Superintendent Scott Nakaji stated, "Sadly, we have reached the point where both staffing and equipment failures have left us with no other option but to close Peninsula." Nakaji stated Folsom Lake SRA is allocated 21 ranger/peace officer positions and generally operates with 13 to 16 of those positions filled. Minimal staffing would be 10 to 11 rangers. At present there are 8 ranger/peace officers.

Added Nakaji, "We started the season back in April with 10 peace officers, nine rangers and one lifeguard, and we lost two of the rangers for the season to illness and injury. Last week, we lost another ranger to his military commitment. We no longer have enough peace officers for the safety of our visitors at all locations."

Folsom Lake SRA, which includes Lake Natoma, spans three counties and has over 100 miles of trails and 75 miles of shoreline. Nakaji states things have been made more difficult this year by the high water levels which have attracted record crowds.

He went on to state there are significant challenges to operating the Peninsula unit. It is a remote, 100 site campground and day use area located 10 miles from Cool, California (off Highway 49) down a narrow country road. Given the remote nature of the park and the extended response time for law enforcement and emergency services units, the park has to dedicate two officers to its operation during the busy summer weekends. "With our current staffing levels it takes away from our ability to safely manage the rest of the lake, specifically

For energy efficient recreation –
California State Parks on the Internet: www.parks.ca.gov>



our most popular units like Granite Bay and Beals Point,” said Nakaji. State Parks plans to redirect staff from Peninsula to the more heavily used units at Folsom Lake SRA.

Nakaji stated that other rangers have been redirected to work at Folsom Lake from other parks within the District and he has also been able to borrow rangers from neighboring Districts, but those parks have their own obligations and the help is inconsistent.

Peninsula is a seasonal unit, normally open only from April 1 through September 30. State Park officials estimate they will lose around \$10,000 by closing the campground.

Individuals who have made reservations will be contacted by ReserveAmerica and offered a chance to camp at other campgrounds in the state where possible or will be given full refunds. Folsom Lake’s Beals Point Campground (49 family campsites and 20 RV sites) will remain open and will be unaffected by the closure of Peninsula Campground.

“We deeply regret having to take this action,” Nakaji said. “No park manger takes any joy in having to close a campground, particularly in the middle of the summer. We’re just glad we were able to keep it open through the July 4th holiday.”

#